

**MADISON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 27, 2006**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Lane Adamson, Pat Bradley, Dorothy Davis, MaryLou Freese, John Lounsbury, Dave Maddison, Bill Olson, Eileen Pearce, and Ed Ruppel.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Laurie Schmidt and Ann Schwend.

OTHERS PRESENT: Larry Larsen, Chris Eaton, Margie and Les Reeves, Chris Lowe, Tony McCue, Jim Harris, County Commissioner Ted Coffman, Chris Murphy, Dawn Myrvik, Kelly Galloup, Mara-Gai Katz, Chris Leonard, Gayle Schabarker, Doug Forsman, Bill Tash, Tom Olenicki, Craig Kenworthy, Scott Bechtle, Ron Slade, Jessi Fanelli, Tim Beardsley, Tom Arrandale, Kevin Germain, Jeff Burrell, Lee Poole, County Planner Doris Fischer, Planning Board Secretary Marilee Foreman-Tucker, and Planner I Staci Beecher.

President Bill Olson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the February 27, 2006 meeting minutes with one addition. **Moved by:** Ed Ruppel. **Seconded by:** Dorothy Davis. **All voted aye.**

President's Comments: President Olson commented that he was encouraged to see applicants working collaboratively with the Planning Board. He also commended the Planning Board and Planning Staff for their objectivity.

PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSION: OLD GREENHOUSE PROPERTY, ENNIS (Chris Murphy, landowner)

Doris Fisher explained the proposed project would be a five-lot commercial/industrial subdivision located approximately two miles north of Ennis. The property is currently eight acres, with one feasible access off of US Hwy. 287.

Chris Murphy informed the Board that the Montana Department of Transportation refused to issue an additional access to this property. He proposes to use a frontage road to access all lots. Murphy stated that Gateway Engineering will help design the lots and infrastructure. All properties will contain individual wells and septic systems. Murphy commented that he will cleanup the property and try to use the existing structure as storage or shop space.

Comments/Questions from the Planning Board and Others:

- Is there potential to hit geothermal activity when drilling a well?
Yes, it is a possibility. We are negotiating a contract for water from a hot water well nearby.
- What about covenants on the property?
Yes, there will be industrial/commercial covenants enforced to keep property values high.

**PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSION: REEVES MINOR SUBDIVISION, ALDER
(Les & Marguerite Reeves, landowners)**

Doris described this proposed project as a two-lot residential subsequent minor subdivision near Alder. The two lots will be approximately 10 and 20 acres in size. Doris commented that the Reeves are planning to move the existing road to a better suited location. This new road would be considered a subdivision road up to the point of the first driveway. Les Reeves mentioned that the new road and driveways would likely be constructed in the fall. Doris felt relocating the road would be a good idea as it is currently near a riparian area. President Olson and Doris both stated that a cul-de-sac would be necessary. Doris suggested that the Reeves contact Ralph Hamler, as the soils show some potential for flooding.

**PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSION: SLIDE INN PROPERTY, CAMERON
(Kelly Galloup, landowner)**

Doris mentioned that a similar project was presented to the Planning Board about two years ago, but it was not finalized. The current proposal would create four residential/commercial lots near the Madison River. Doris stated that this project would likely require a variance from the 500 ft. setback requirement to create buildable lots. The land is surrounded by BLM, State, and U.S. Forest Service land.

Kelly Galloup commented that his intent is to cleanup the property and make it more valuable. He anticipated that the project would be done in several different stages to make it financially feasible. As lots sell, Galloup plans to reduce the number of existing buildings, septic systems, and cabins. According to Doris, project phasing could be accomplished with a Planned Unit Development. Also, design guidelines might be helpful in the planning of the project.

Galloup will institute strict covenants to help maintain and increase property values. He is considering dedicating an easement through his property to access the river. He has consulted a land trust as another option.

Comments/Questions from the Planning Board and Others:

- What distance do you envision for a river setback on these lots?
Approximately, 150 ft. from the river depending on where the measurement starts.
- Would there be a driveway accessing each lot?

**PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSION: HARRIS MINOR SUBDIVISION, MCALLISTER
(James & Mary Pat Harris, landowners)**

Doris described this project as a four lot residential subdivision near McAllister above Ennis Lake. The property is accessed by Ennis Lake Road, a County road. The property is mostly surrounded by agricultural lands and open fields. This property is comprised on two separate parcels of land beside each other. One of the existing parcels has an agricultural exemption attached, whereas the other parcel has one existing home structure.

The ag exemption needs to be lifted in order to carry out the subdivision plan of splitting each lot.

James Harris explained that the road would go through the middle of the two tracts and a cul-de-sac would be utilized for the lots. The landowners are planning to use underground power lines and will have covenants to protect property values. The water supply looks to be adequate as the existing well depth is about 98 ft.

Comments/Questions from the Planning Board and Others:

- Is there a public emergency access easement route to get back to the County road?
- What is the width of the subdivision road easement?
20 or 30 ft.
- The road easement width needs to be at least 60 ft.
- The grade of the road looks to be approximately 8 percent.
- Have you consulted with adjacent neighbors about project?
No, not at this time.

PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSION: EATON MINOR SUBDIVISION, ENNIS (Chris & Julie Eaton, landowners, Larry Larsen, representative)

Doris described this project as a three lot residential subdivision on about seven acres near Gravelly Range Road and Varney Road. One parcel has an existing lot that the Eatons' plan to rent. They plan to build a new personal home on the second lot and keep the third lot at the present time.

MOTION: To move down the agenda to old business until 7:15 p.m. Moved by: Eileen Pearce. **Seconded by:** Ed Ruppel. **All voted aye.**

OLD BUSINESS

Development Impact Fees

Doris mentioned the Planning Office has received some general information from Tischler/Bise along with an RFP and study for Ravalli County. A development impact fee feasibility study from Tischler/Bise would cost about \$9,800. Pat asked why a feasibility study is needed if we currently have the authority to start implementing development impact fees. Doris responded by stating that the fees need to be calculated fairly. Also, we need to determine if the County is growing fast enough to spend the fees for capital improvements in a timely manner. Doris stated that she is interested in pursuing a development impact fee study for fire stations.

Dave mentioned that the County may not need to spend \$9,800 at this time for the study. John asked if grant funding could be utilized for the study cost. Doris has consulted with the County Grant Writer, Julie Dewey, and she seems willing to look into this issue. The Commissioners will continue to look at development impact fees in the County.

CONTINUED REVIEW OF OVERALL DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR MOONLIGHT BASIN RANCH (MBR), BIG SKY (Moonlight Basin Ranch, owner of unplatted lands)

Doris updated the Board members and others about new Moonlight Basin Ranch documents, additional information, and events that have occurred since the February 27th meeting. The updated information contained in the Planning Board packets included: a chronology of events, a wolverine study, summary of meeting with Ron Slade, summary of the *Effects of Recreation on Rocky Mountain Wildlife*, additional public letters, public input, and input from Allen Kyles about proposed MBR covenants. President Olson stated that all substantive Board member conversations about MBR that have occurred outside meeting should be discussed. John Lounsbury described his recent conversation with Forest Service personnel.

Doris then invited Kevin Germain, MBR representative, to further explain the project developments. Germain introduced Ron Slade (Bechtel/Slade Architecture), Tom Olenicki (Wildlife Expert), and Doug Forsman (Emergency Services), as other members of the MBR team. Germain mentioned that he had been involved in numerous meetings with many wildlife centered agencies and groups. MBR has decided to create a new wildlife conservation officer position to help manage and enforce wildlife covenants, minimize potential for human-wildlife conflicts, create a standard operating procedures manual for dealing with wildlife species, and promote wildlife education. Germain stated that Mark Glines, currently a Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Game Warden, will fill the position on June 3, 2006. A culvert trap for bears will also be constructed and available for use if needed.

Germain mentioned that water quality monitoring stations will be utilized to monitor impacts from the development and golf course. There will be six total stations near Jack Creek, with three of these on MBR property. This will be a collaborative effort with Montana State University and the Ennis High School. Also, geotechnical information is now available from NTL Geotech about desirable and undesirable building sites.

Ron Slade, of Bechtel/Slade Architecture, addressed the site planning issues involved in the Overall Development Plan. He stressed the importance of collaborative work with the County on the project. Slade stated that he uses a constraints based planning approach. Some of the constraints to development that were identified included: slopes, vegetation, wetlands, water supply, wildlife habitat, geotechnical problems, and ridgelines. Slade confirmed that the constraints are still being considered. When the composite suitability analysis is complete, the site plan and development pods will be reassessed.

Tom Olenicki, a wildlife expert, explained some of the wildlife issues associated with development in the area. Currently, he is in the process of studying and mapping wildlife connectivity and the loss of wildlife habitat due to development. The study should be finalized in the next few weeks. Olenicki stated that there are presently many unknown factors relating to development impacts on wildlife in the area. He commented that development pods may need to be moved for better wildlife movement and connectivity.

Comments/Questions from the Planning Board and Others For Tom Olenicki:

- How can you monitor development impacts on wildlife if the construction hasn't occurred yet?
The development will be occurring in phases; it will be monitored in phases. Cameras, snow tracks, and GPS collars will be used to monitor wildlife.
- Do you concur with Mark Petroni's suggestion to shift the development pods to the east and leave the Jack Creek Drainage area open?
In some ways it may make sense to move pods to the east; however, moving development there might trap animals. With the preliminary information it is difficult to address.

Doug Forsman, an emergency services professional working with MBR to develop an emergency services plan, presented an update. He has been in close contact with Fire Chief Jason Revisky of the Gallatin Canyon Consolidated Rural Fire District (GCCRFD) and the U.S. Forest Service. MBR is currently in the process of trying to annex into the GCCRFD. The comprehensive emergency services plan will address the following issues: Fire protection, evacuation, medical services, law enforcement, emergency services station, communications, and safety issues. An emergency services station with two fire bays, office for law enforcement, and possible living quarters is being considered. Forsman suggested this central location for emergency services will help with communications. The plan will focus on the demand for local emergency services and estimate the potential need for increased services. Forsman stated that both structural fires and wildfires are a major concern; mitigation factors need to be addressed.

Comments/Questions from the Planning Board and Others For Doug Forsman:

- Is there any guarantee of fire protection for structures?
There will be a recommendation that all homes have automatic fire sprinkler systems. This is good from an insurance aspect.
- Would like to see Moonlight homeowners contribute funding to Forest Service to help cover their costs of fighting structural fires.
- Covenants will include a defensible clear space around development.
- Will this defensible space covenant be enforced? Or will the trees and scenery become more important?
Yes, the GCCRFD has authority to enforce this.
- Emergency Services Plan should be complete in about two weeks.
- Will overall access requirements be considered in the plan?
Yes, we are also looking at avalanche risk.

Comments/Questions from the Planning Board and Others:

- Encouraged to see the process progressing.
- More comfortable with the broader and thoughtful approach to the plan.
- Is it possible to get a copy of the geotech maps with scale and an explanation?
Yes.

- The numerous letters of support show how many people are interested in the project.
- The Big Sky area accounts for about 30 percent of county tax base.
- MBR has done a lot of things right.
- We are now getting the information we need to make an informed decision.
- We need more information on loss of wildlife habitat, "Reserve Ranches", and elk hunting on property.
- The delayed decision has been a good thing.
- Wildlife habitat is diminishing as more development occurs in this area and private lands are becoming a wildlife sanctuary.
- Some of the trails aren't in appropriate areas. MBR might want to reconsider trail locations.

Comments/Questions from Public:

- Board will need to consider trade-offs when making a decision.
- All wildlife species should be considered.
- Need to look at ways to coordinate with public land managers for fire safety and prevention.

Conclusion:

Both President Olson and Doris mentioned that traffic impacts should be carefully considered. We need to look at what the Montana Department of Transportation, Gallatin County, Madison County, and the major developers can do to make road improvements, especially on MT Highway 64. Doris commented that the additional information provided by MBR will help the Planning Board make an informed recommendation. MBR will provide the Planning Office with an emergency services plan, wildlife study, and composite suitability analysis within two weeks. The Moonlight Basin Ranch Overall Development Plan will be considered again at the April 24, 2006 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS (CONTINUED)

Madison Growth Solutions Process

Lane Adamson reported that the public forum on March 14, 2006 in Ennis had a large turnout. Citizens are talking about possible actions for protecting community values. There will be an upcoming meeting at the Sonoran Institute to address the process of drafting an action plan. The next forum is tentatively scheduled for the last week in April.

Draft Resolution to Allow Limits on Number of Subdivision Applications

Dave Maddison wondered why there wasn't a specified number limiting the amount of applications. Doris responded by stating that different projects require different amounts of time. Also, the update of the County Comprehensive Plan will require additional office time. Maddison expressed concern about how the public might view this negatively. Ted Coffman suggested adding language *that deferred applications would be reviewed in the order they were received due to heavy workload.*

MOTION: To recommend the endorsement of this Resolution to the County Commission as per Ted Coffman's suggested amendment. Moved by: Lane Adamson. Seconded by: Ed Ruppel. All voted aye.

GROWTH POLICY UPDATE PROCESS

Doris described a proposal to hold a series of open houses around the County as a way to gather citizen input. These open houses could be held in conjunction with another meeting or function to increase attendance. These open houses will be conducted sometimes in the spring of this year. President Olson suggested holding the Big Sky Open House later in June or doing a mail out survey due to the large number of absentee residents. Ed Ruppel stated that holding an open house in conjunction with a Rotary Club meeting may work well in Twin Bridges. The Madison Growth Solutions process and the Housing Task Force will generate some material information to incorporate into the Growth Policy.

OTHER: None

NEW BUSINESS

Planning Board Member Reports: None

Planner Report

The report is included in Planning Board packets.

Other

Dave Maddison suggested eliminating the pre-application meeting with the Planning Board. He stated that the Planning Office could serve the pre-application function. The pre-applications would be distributed to the Planning Board members in the packets. Pat Bradley mentioned that the public should know what projects are on the horizon. President Olson supported this suggestion and added that there could be Board discussion if it was deemed necessary. Also, Board members could be polled on which sites they would like to visit. Board members agreed on eliminating pre-application meetings with the Planning Board.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Planning Board will be April 24, 2006.

William J. Olson, President

Staci Beecher, Planner I